

CHILDREN AFFECTED BY MORE THAN SEVERE WEATHER

When the power goes out, what happens to the children?

The summer of 2011 will be remembered for the damaging winds and torrential downpours of Hurricane Irene. Power was out for many families all over the state. But for some people, living in the dark or cold doesn't occur because of widespread power outages. When it comes to many low-income or otherwise struggling families, the choice often comes down to paying the rent, feeding the kids or keeping on the heat and lights.

The US Census Bureau states that although Maryland ranks as one of the wealthiest states, poverty increased by 12.5% from 2009 to 2010. While many Maryland suburbs are wealthy, their prosperity hides growing poverty in rural and urban areas. And the ones who suffer the most are children. Research shows that children in energy-insecure households are more likely to:

- Be food insecure
- Be in fair or poor health
- Be at risk for developmental delays
- Have been hospitalized since birth
- Have moved two or more times in the past year

Comments Mary Ellen Vanni, Executive Director of the Fuel Fund of Maryland, "For children, moving several times a year impacts more than social life at school - It means these kids have to start all over again with classes, making it more difficult to keep up with their grade level. And what about coming back after school to a cold and dark home? It's hard to get your homework done, putting the child further behind in school."

Ms. Vanni continues, "At the Fuel Fund of Maryland, we are very aware that over half the people we help are children. In fiscal year 2011, more than 11,000 Maryland children received assistance through the Fuel Fund networks.

That's 11,000 children whose families are more likely to stay in stable living situations. But there are thousands more who still need our help."

If you lost power during the storms, then you faced first-hand what thousands of Maryland children live with daily. We hope that experience will motivate you to support the Fuel Fund so that Maryland families with children won't have to make life-threatening choices between food, housing or energy this winter.

Sources: www.nationalfuelunds.org; www.marylandreporter.com



Do you participate in Workplace Giving Programs?
Designate the Fuel Fund of Maryland!

United Way of Central Maryland: 99844

CCC National Area: 99844

CCC Chesapeake Area: 99844

CCC Baltimore City: 7695

Maryland Charities Campaign: 7695



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Fall 2011 Newsletter

LIGHT STROKES

From the President



Dear Friends:

The “dog days” of summer are behind us. While record heat may be a memory, challenges remain

for many of our neighbors. As high unemployment lingers and poverty extends its reach into the middle class, many families in Maryland face winter and its relentless cold without the means to provide the heat and power necessary for their families to survive and thrive.

Among those who suffer most are children. Did you know over 50 percent of the people Fuel Fund donors assist each year are under the age of 19? Your donations help the Fuel Fund of Maryland keep these children, as well as their parents and grandparents, connected to life-sustaining energy.

The Fuel Fund of Maryland not only helps keep families safe and warm, however. Through our Watt Watchers of Maryland program, the Fuel Fund empowers families to take control of their consumption and better manage their finances. In the upcoming year, the Fuel Fund will make Watt Watchers available to every family that receives energy assistance from us. This will help them take an important step toward sustainability and put them on the path to self-sufficiency.

With your support, the Fuel Fund is helping families get on with the important job of being a family. We thank you for your support and look forward to a day when all of us are safe and warm in our homes.

Marnell A. Cooper
President

RAYS OF HOPE

THE FUEL FUND MAKES HOLIDAY MAGIC

Dancing snowflakes. A Nutcracker Prince. The Sugar Plum Fairy. There’s a special enchantment in the holidays, a magic most vividly reflected in the eyes of children.

Shouldn’t all children be able to experience the joys of childhood and the magic of the holidays? But when you’re Christine R., a single mother of 3-month old twin daughters with limited income and only sporadic child support, it’s hard to conjure that magic for your babies - particularly when your electricity and heat have been shut off because you can’t afford to pay. No hot water to wash baby clothes, no stove to sterilize bottles, no lights to change baby diapers or read bedtime stories. Christine couldn’t handle this alone - she needed help! The Fuel Fund of Maryland rescued Christine with financial support for her utility bill within two days after she sought our help.

As we come up on the festive holiday season, let’s try to give all children the warmth and light they deserve. A holiday season in a dark and cold apartment is not the stuff of dreams. Here’s how you can give the gift of holiday spirit to your family and share warmth and light with those less fortunate:

For the first time ever, the Fuel Fund of Maryland is partnering with Moscow Ballet to help raise much needed donations for the Fund while offering specially discounted tickets to the “Great Russian Nutcracker” at the Lyric Opera House in



Enjoy the Moscow Ballet’s “Great Russian Nutcracker” while supporting the Fuel Fund!

Baltimore! Five dollars from each already specially discounted Fuel Fund ticket will go directly to provide heat and home utility assistance for community members most in need. There are matinee and evening performances on Saturday, December 17 and Sunday, December 18. This world-class production is must see for the whole family!

When you purchase tickets, you will simultaneously make a \$5 donation (included in the ticket price) to the Fuel Fund of Maryland by using the code “FUEL” for the specially discounted \$73, \$58 or \$45.50 seats:

Call 800-320-1733 or go to <http://www.nutcracker.com/fuefund>. With your ticket purchase using the “FUEL” code, you’ll help needy children and their families have a warm and bright holiday season, while experiencing your own holiday magic with the “Great Russian Nutcracker”.

How to Support the Fuel Fund

We keep families safe and warm because of donors like you!

- Donate through www.fuefundmaryland.org.
- Mail your check or money order to: Fuel Fund of Maryland, P.O. Box 62266, Baltimore, MD 21264-2266.
- Remember the Fuel Fund in your will.
- Contribute through workplace giving opportunities.
- Sponsor an event or host a fundraiser.
- Give through the donation envelope in your BGE Bill.

For more information, contact Bill Freeman at 410-821-3022, ext. 2 or via email at bfreeman@fuefundmaryland.org.



SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEERS

Spread the Warmth!

School is in session! For the sixth year, students at Maryvale Prep have run an education and awareness program about the Fuel Fund. Called "Spread the Warmth", the program educates about sound energy practices and raises awareness about the many people helped by the Fuel Fund. Student Teresa Simmermeyer continues to lead the program. New this year: please join the Fuel Fund in welcoming the girls at Notre Dame Prep to the "Spread the Warmth" family! Mallory O'Connor and Katie Ramey are spearheading the new chapter at NDP.

Interested in starting a "Spread the Warmth" chapter at your school? The Fuel Fund is looking for new schools to join in, as well as adult liaisons at each school.

YouthWorks Interns

This past summer, Darneka Brown of Western High School and John Nguro of the University of Baltimore interned at the Fuel Fund offices through YouthWorks, a program of the Baltimore Mayor's Office of Employment Development. The duo kept records, made site visits to network partners

and learned about the importance of energy assistance in keeping families safe. Darneka said, "Working at the Fuel Fund was a great experience for me. I'm so glad I was assigned this job." John, who is originally from Kenya, has long been a part of the Fuel Fund family: his mother's first job in America was with the Fuel Fund of Maryland! He remarked, "I will always cherish my time here at the Fuel Fund."



Maryvale students help raise awareness during their "Lights Out" event

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Saving Energy...Saving Money!

Saturday, October 29: Just in time for Halloween, join the Fuel Fund and corporate partner Direct Energy at nonprofit The Loading Dock from 1-3:30PM for some hands-on fun with "Vampire Energy", workshops & tips on winterizing your home and specials on supplies. This is a fun and educational day for the whole family! 2 N. Kresson St., Baltimore, 21224

Fuel Fund Volunteer Orientation

Our volunteer orientation and information session is held the first Wednesday of every month. Lunchtime and after-work sessions are available.

VOLUNTEER

If you are interested in volunteering for the Fuel Fund, please contact Danielle Phelps at 410-821-3022, ext. 106. Available opportunities include office support, event support, school liaison & Watt Watchers of Maryland™ educator. All volunteers will receive training & support.

FUEL FUND NEWS

Fuel Fund Welcomes New Board and Staff!

Natalie A. Barnes is the Business Development Manager with Advantage Industries in Columbia, Maryland. Moved by the unfortunate circumstances of a friend, Natalie quickly became interested in the Fuel Fund and its mission to provide resources to vulnerable Maryland families for heat and home utility needs. A resident of Hanover, Maryland, she is an active member of the community including membership in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce.

Jennifer R. Busse is a partner with the law firm of Whiteford Taylor Preston, where she has provided representation for national companies such as BGE, Constellation, Genesis Healthcare, Target, Sprint and Ryland Homes. Jennifer tells us she is impressed with the Fuel Fund's goal to help people help themselves by offering people assistance with their energy needs, as well as job/career training and social services. A resident of Lutherville, Jennifer is active in the community including membership in the Baltimore County Sustainability Network, Maryland State Bar Association, Baltimore County Bar Association and Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce.

Bill Freeman joined the Fuel Fund as the Director of Development in September. Inspired by the mission and accomplishments of the Fuel Fund, Bill looks forward to helping the agency reach more families in need. Feel free to contact Bill at bfreeman@fuelfundmaryland.org to discuss the fund raising initiatives of the Fuel Fund.



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bright lights

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Fall 2011 Newsletter



Our YouthWorks volunteers, Darneka and John

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The mission of the Fuel Fund of Maryland is to supplement the resources of those experiencing hardship with their home energy needs.